

DATE: 8 October 2024

TO: TWS Organization Unit, Working Group, and Conservation Affairs Committee leaders

FROM: TWS Council Policy Priorities Committee

RE: Input on TWS Policy Priorities

TWS Conservation Affairs Committee Chairs, Chapter, Section and Working Group Leaders:

We are reaching out to request input on The Wildlife Society's 2025-2026 policy priorities.

[The Wildlife Society's mission](#) is to empower wildlife professionals to advance conservation through science, community, and professional excellence. One way we accomplish this mission is through our engagement in the policy process. To focus this policy work on issues of relevance to the profession, [TWS Council](#) periodically establishes specific policy priorities. This list of specific objectives helps ensure efficient and effective use of staff and member resources and expertise.

The Wildlife Society regularly [engages in policy](#) issues to support and benefit the wildlife profession and advance science-based wildlife conservation and management decisions. TWS staff monitor and strategically engage in issues covering a [broad range of topics](#) that

1) affect wildlife professionals and/or their ability to sustain wildlife populations and their habitat, 2) are encompassed by an existing TWS [position or issue statement](#), or 3) affect the ability of scientific information to inform the decision-making process.

The Policy Priorities Committee has been working on making the process of identifying, developing, and prioritizing TWS' policy priorities more transparent and inclusive of the issues facing our members throughout North America. This means the process of soliciting your input will be a little different than in years past. We want to know what your chapter, section, or working group believes to be the most important issues facing wildlife and/or wildlife professionals for TWS to engage with in the coming years. We'll be gathering this input in two phases as outlined below.

Identifying Priority Issues:

The Committee will be seeking broad input on issues facing wildlife and wildlife professionals (e.g. climate change, energy development, invasive species, etc.) The first opportunity to provide policy input will be during a Conservation Affairs Network discussion on October 22nd at the annual meeting in Baltimore, MD. We encourage you to work with your [Conservation Affairs Committee](#) (CAC) or other relevant policy committee to discuss ideas that one or more representatives can bring to this meeting. We also will hold a virtual discussion/listening session following the annual conference where units and working groups can provide additional input. If you are unable to send a representative to the discussion in Baltimore or to the virtual meeting, then you may submit policy priority ideas to policy@wildlife.org by November 18th. We will use input from these avenues to develop a final list of priorities.

Ranking Priorities:

Each TWS Section and Working Group will receive the final list of identified priorities on December 2nd, and will have until January 10th to rank those priorities in order of importance and desired level of TWS engagement. The Committee asks that Section CAC Chairs and Executive Boards coordinate with their respective Chapters through whatever process best fits the structure of those units to produce a final ranking submission. Please include your Section Representative in these deliberations. We also ask that each Working Group Executive Board coordinate within their Working Group to produce a final ranking submission. TWS policy staff are available to help assist units throughout this process. The Committee will use the results of this process to develop a final set of policy priorities. Areas where these priorities result in associated actions for the upcoming session of the U.S. Congress will be identified and highlighted. We will communicate these priorities to TWS members shortly thereafter.

Please let me know if you have any questions about this request. The Policy Priorities Committee looks forward to your participation in this process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Riddle", with a horizontal line drawn through it.

Jason Riddle
Chair, Policy Priorities Committee
TWS Council Representative, North Central Section
jriddle@uwsp.edu